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## INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION PARTNERS WITH STATE CHAPTERS ON SPRING 2025 EVENTS

NEWARK, Del. (October 15, 2024) — The International Literacy Association (ILA) announced today that it is working in collaboration with two of the organization's chapters, the Massachusetts Reading Association (MRA) and the State of Maryland Literacy Association (SoMLA), providing program, promotional and sponsorship support for each group's annual meeting.

The two conferences take place back-to-back next spring, with MRA's held in Newton, MA, on March 27 and 28, 2025, and SoMLA's in Towson, MD, the following week on April 2 and April 3. Additionally, ILA is cosponsoring one of MRA's preconference workshops on March 26. That 90-minute session will focus on ILA's Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals and related National Recognition program, which recognizes outstanding educator preparation programs that adhere to ILA's rigorous standards.

"MRA is beyond thrilled to collaborate with the International Literacy Association, which will solidify our commitment to presenting diverse topics to a diverse audience," said Adam Brieske-Ulenski, MRA's president-elect and 2025 conference chair. "ILA's support will help advance MRA's mission of welcoming educators from all over to participate in conversations, presentations and research on our most pressing topics in literacy education."

"ILA is known for bringing educators and researchers together for high-quality professional learning experiences," said Sandra Keaton, SoMLA's 2025 conference chair. "SoMLA is proud to have ILA as a valued partner to enhance our conference with engaging evidence-based sessions aligned with our shared mission."

Prior to 2020 and the widespread disruption caused by COVID-19, ILA hosted its own annual conference in various cities across the United States. The organization has since opted not to resume its large-scale, face-to-face meetings, focusing efforts instead on creating high-quality digital content. One notable exception: a single-day event on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging held in partnership with Delaware State University on the latter's main campus in Dover, DE.

The success of that event, and the positive feedback received from attendees, led to ILA exploring new ways of facilitating professional learning opportunities that would allow educators to connect and engage with one another. Regional conferences, such as those organized by ILA's chapters, tend to be more affordable and accessible to educators—two qualities that greatly appealed to ILA Executive Director Nicola Wedderburn.

"The desire to attend a conference and the means to do so are two totally different things," said Wedderburn. "There are financial and logistical barriers to participation, including lack of funding and even the ability to arrange for classroom coverage." State conferences, she said, are better positioned to remove some of those barriers.

"I have always maintained that our chapters and affiliates are the lifeblood of this organization," Wedderburn said. "Investing our resources to support them, through their events or otherwise, makes sense on every level."

To learn more about MRA's conference, visit [massreading.org/2025-conference](https://massreading.org/2025-conference). To learn more about SoMLA's event, visit [somla.online/2025-somla-conference](https://somla.online/2025-somla-conference).

***About the International Literacy Association***

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a professional membership organization of literacy educators, researchers and experts spanning 128 countries. For nearly 70 years, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated, connecting research and practice to improve the quality of literacy learning across the globe. Through its Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals, ILA provides an evidence-based benchmark for the development and evaluation of literacy professional preparation programs. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, which include three peer-reviewed and edited journals—The Reading Teacher, Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy and Reading Research Quarterly. Learn more at [literacyworldwide.org](https://literacyworldwide.org).

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